Remarks

Claims are 1-4, 6-11, 13-18, 20-25, 27, and 28 are pending and stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a). Claims 1, 8, 15, and 22 are amended. Applicants assert that the claims are in condition for allowance as set forth more fully below.

Rejection based on well known feature

While it is unclear which claims are implicated and what the basis for the rejection is as no statutory authority and no prior art references have been set forth, the Office Action indicates that the claims are rejected as reading on a cellular phone with voice mail. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Initially, it should be noted that redirecting to voicemail when a cellular phone is unreachable is not redirection to a different directory number. However, to further clarify this point, the claims include recitations to a first and a second subscriber line. As an example, claim 1 recites, in part, a system for routing communications directed to a directory number corresponding to a first subscriber line, wherein a redirection service is operative with respect to the communications directed to the directory number to automatically direct the communications away from the directory number, without intervention by a calling party, to at least one other directory number corresponding to a second subscriber line whenever the directory number to which the communications are directed is temporarily inoperative due to a temporary service disruption. Claim 1 further recites that the system comprises a switch configured to receive each of the communications in a communication network, wherein each of the communications are directed to the temporarily inoperative directory number having the redirection service, and wherein for each communication the switch is configured to detect whether the temporarily inoperative directory number associated with a current one of the communications is inoperative and is further configured to complete the current communication to the temporarily inoperative directory number corresponding to the first subscriber line when the temporarily inoperative directory number is operative for the current communication and to redirect the current communication to the at least one other directory number corresponding to the second subscriber line when instructed to do so.

Thus, it should be noted that the temporarily inoperative directory number that has been detected as being inoperative by the switch for a current communication corresponds to one subscriber line, e.g., a telephone line, while the at least one other directory number that is used to complete the current communication when the other is inoperative corresponds to a second subscriber line. Applicants assert that it should be evident that because the directory numbers each correspond to different subscriber lines, the other directory number that corresponds to a second subscriber line is not a voicemail box. Therefore, the rejection based on the alleged well known feature should be withdrawn since the voicemail feature for cellular phones does not redirect to a directory number corresponding to a second subscriber line.

103 Rejections

Claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-18, 20-25, and 27-28 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson (US Pat 5,259,026) in view of Daly (US Pat 5,222,128). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

As indicated by the recitations set forth above in the representative example of claim 1, the claims include recitations to the switch detecting whether the directory number is inoperative and if so, then completing the call to another directory number as instructed to do so, and if not, then completing the call to the directory number. Furthermore, claim 1 recites a controller, in communication with the switch, wherein the switch is configured to provide an indication that the temporarily inoperative directory number is inoperative to the controller upon detecting that the temporarily inoperative directory number is inoperative for the current communication, and wherein the controller includes a database of subscriber information maintained by the network, and wherein the controller is configured to search the database of subscriber information for a matching entry to the temporarily inoperative directory number in response to receiving the indication, and wherein the controller is configured to instruct the switch to redirect the current communication away from the temporarily inoperative directory number to the at least one other directory number upon finding the matching entry, and wherein the controller is configured to retain the temporarily inoperative directory number in the

database for routing a subsequent one of the communications thereto after the temporary service disruption has been resolved.

Neither Johnson nor Daly provide for the switch detecting, for each communication it receives for a directory number, whether the directory number is inoperative for that current communication, and if so then redirecting to another directory number when instructed, and completing the communication to the directory number when it is operative.

Johnson is concerned with finding an inoperative number and then replacing it altogether for all future calls by replacing the inoperative number with an operative one and the operative one is then used for all calls thereafter. Johnson does not allow for the switch to complete a call to the temporarily inoperative directory number once it is operative again because in Johnson, the inoperative directory number is treated as being permanently inoperative by replacing it altogether.

To account for the temporarily inoperative deficiency of Johnson, the Office Action states that Daly discloses temporarily inoperative directory numbers. However, Daly fails to disclose that the switch can detect for each call whether the directory number is inoperative or not such that the switch can either complete the call to the directory number or redirect to another if the first is inoperative. To the contrary, Daly discloses that redirection occurs on the basis of the switch being commanded to redirect all calls or not redirect all calls such that the switch does not perform any detection of inoperability to determine whether redirection should occur.

As stated in Daly, redirection occurs once the network service provider technician for the SSSR tool enters a command to the switch to invoke the redirection upon the subscriber informing the network service provider that redirection is necessary. Likewise, the redirection is "undone" so that the calls are sent to the non-redirected directory number only once the subscriber has informed the network service provide to undo redirection and the network serviced provider technician for the SSSR tool enters a command to the switch to undo the redirection. This is repeated several times within Daly, such as at col. 3, lines 58-68 and col. 10, line 63- col. 11, line 27. Thus, the switch is not detecting inoperability to invoke redirection since the technician is invoking or undoing redirection via commands of the SSSR tool.

Accordingly, claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-18, 20-25, 27, and 28 are allowable over the cited references singly and in combination for at least these reasons.

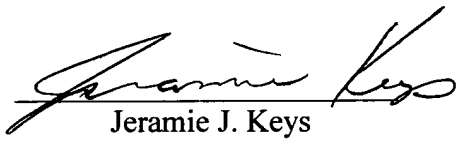
Conclusion

Applicants assert that the application including claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-38, 20-25, and 27-28 is now in condition for allowance. Applicants request reconsideration in view of the amendments and remarks above and further request that a Notice of Allowability be provided. Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

No fees are believed due beyond the fee for continued examination. However, please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-3025.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: May 26, 2005



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